

Massachusetts Forest Update

July 2017

Report from the MFA Annual Meeting

Good weather, interesting speakers, and good conversation were all part of the Forest Alliance's 5th Annual Meeting and programs at Mass Wildlife's Richard Cronin Building in Westborough on June 3rd. More than 100 landowners, foresters, loggers and others took part in the day's events, which featured a theme of partnerships.

The day began with a well-attended bird walk on the neighboring Wayne MacCallum Wildlife Management Area, where wildlife biologists Sean Williams and Marianne Piche pointed out various types of bird habitats and the different birds that utilize them.

The main portion of the meeting began with a welcome from Executive Director Nathan L'Etoile and brief comments by Jack Buckley, Director of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, as well as from Dave Celino, head of DCR's Bureau of Forest Fire Control.

The opening technical session of the day included two offerings. The first was a panel presentation on *Telling Our Story*, and featured talks by: Paul Catanzaro from UMass Extension on the Keystone Project; MFA's Bryn Gingrich about the Mass Statewide Wood Energy Team project; Mike Bartlett from Hull Forest Products about the firm's diverse marketing effort.

A concurrent session focused on *The Use of Telematics* in harvesting technology by Paul Beaupre from Schmidt Equipment to help track the health of forestry equipment and mapping and monitoring operations on the jobsite.

Following a short break, attendees had a choice of two sessions. The first, titled *Using our own Wood*, featured discussions by: Bob Perschel from New England Forestry Foundation about NEFF's *Build it with Wood* initiative; Charlie Cary about the value of traditionally non-merchantable waste wood for local wood heat production; and Peggi Clouston from UMass about the new design building at UMass and the potential for use of cross-laminated timber in construction.

In the second session, John Scanlon from Mass Wildlife explained the key elements of habitat for wildlife, and how forestry is key in diversifying and improving the range of available habitats.

After a tasty bag lunch, a short MFA business meeting was held, reviewing the last year, looking forward, and concluding with the election of directors and officers. Peter Rayton of Northampton was elected for the first time to the Board of Directors, Jim Kelly as Secretary, and Dicken Crane as Vice President.

In the afternoon session, one program on *Woodland Conservation Partnerships* featured presentations about the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership by Bob O'Connor from EOEEA, land conservation in the Quabbin Region by Sarah Wells from

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, and forest conservation in the MassConn region by Ed Hood from Opacum Land Trust.

A second program about *Restoration of the American Chestnut* by Lois Breault-Melican from the Mass/Rhode Island Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, featured both an inside description of current restoration efforts, and a visit to the chestnut seed orchard on the Mass Wildlife grounds.

This year's program wrapped up with the results of the silent auction of different items donated by companies and members – the auction raised \$2,700. Thanks to all who donated auction items!

State Issues Revised Draft Thermal Energy Regulations - Hearing in Boston July 14th, Comments Due July 17th

The Department of Energy Resources has issued proposed revised draft regulations for the Massachusetts Alternative Portfolio Standard (APS) pursuant to [Chapter 251 of the Acts of 2014](#). These long-awaited regulations would govern the eligibility of renewable energy credits for modern wood heat systems that use locally-grown, renewable wood for heating buildings.

According to DOER, areas of the regulation where significant revisions have been made include:

1. Addition of Fuel Cells and Waste-to-Energy Thermal Technologies

Pursuant to Chapter 188 of the Acts of 2016, the Department has introduced new language which revised the list of eligible APS technologies to include fuel cells and waste-to-energy thermal technologies. This language can be found in 225 CMR 16.02, 225 CMR 16.05(7), and 225 CMR 16.05(8).

2. Eligible Woody Biomass

DOER received numerous comments in regards to Eligible Woody Biomass.

In response to these comments, DOER has revised the definition of Eligible Biomass Woody Fuel, added definitions for Clean Wood and Sustainable Forestry Management, added clarifying provisions regarding the Biomass and Biofuels Suppliers Lists, revised the process for qualifying a central wood heating system, specifically relating to the certification of particulate matter emissions, and revised the provisions surrounding cord wood systems. These revisions can be found in 225 CMR 16.02, 225 CMR 16.05(4) and DOER's *Guideline on Biomass, Biogas, and Biofuels for Eligible Renewable Thermal Generation Units*.

3. Eligible Liquid Biofuel

DOER also received comments requesting that the minimum blend level of 20% for Eligible Liquid Biofuels be reduced and the requirements in regards to the sourcing of waste feedstock be removed.

In response to comments DOER has lowered the minimum blend threshold to 10% and

removed the requirement that all waste feedstock come from a jurisdiction with an organic waste disposal ban, equivalent or similar to Massachusetts. However, in order to prevent a dramatic oversupply of certificates as a result of these changes, DOER has introduced provisions which will cap the number of certificates available for Eligible Liquid Biofuel Generation Units to 20% of the estimated Annual Compliance Obligation. The full list of provisions can be found in 225 CMR 16.05(4)(j).

4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In order to provide further clarity on the process for ensuring a 50% reduction in lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions for Generation Units using biomass, biogas, and biofuels, DOER has introduced several provisions and an additional Guideline for calculating greenhouse gas emissions. The provisions can be found in 225 CMR 16.05(4)(i), DOER's *Guideline on Biomass, Biogas, and Biofuels for Eligible Renewable Thermal Generation Units* and DOER's *Guideline on Reduction of Greenhouse Gases for Eligible Renewable Thermal Generation Units Using Eligible Woody Biomass*.

5. Multipliers for Non Emitting Technologies

DOER has revised and added new multipliers based on technology type. These changes can be found in 225 CMR 16.05(1)6.b.ii and DOER's *Guideline on Metering and Calculating the Useful Thermal Output of Eligible Renewable Thermal Generation Units*.

6. Technical Edits and Clarifications

DOER made several changes to revise technical details and language inconsistencies in the regulation and Guidelines. In order to provide clarity regarding certain provisions, language has also been moved from various Guidelines to the regulation.

The draft regulation and accompanying Guidelines can be accessed at DOER's [website](#) for stakeholder review and comment.

DOER will hold a public hearing to collect written and verbal stakeholder comment on the revised Regulations and Guidelines on July 14th from 10 am to noon at 100 Cambridge Street, Conference Room B on the 2nd floor, in Boston.

DOER will accept written comments on the revised draft regulations until 5 p.m. on July 17th, either as attached pdf files to emails addressed to thermal.doer@state.ma.us, with the word APS COMMENTS in the subject line, or by mail to Samantha Meserve at DOER of Energy Resources, 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020, Boston, MA 02114. Comments received will be posted on DOER's web page.

If you have questions on the documents that have been posted or the rulemaking process, DOER asks that you please direct them to thermal.doer@state.ma.us.

Speak Out for Wood Energy

Do you think the state should encourage the use of wood for heating and energy? Would your woodlands benefit from better markets for wood that is removed when you thin out low grade trees to give better ones room to grow? Do you think the state

should provide incentives for businesses and towns to convert their buildings to some form of wood heat?

If you do, now's the time to speak up. The Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change has been hosting hearings throughout the Commonwealth to get input from you on pressing issues in clean energy and climate, asking residents what they think the legislature should do to keep our state healthy, sustainable and strong? The Committee is taking comments both at public hearings and by email or letter.

We think this presents an opportunity for Forest Alliance members to get the state to focus more on using sustainable wood energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels while sequestering carbon in our forests.

If you want to provide some input but weren't able to attend one of the hearings, you can still file comments by mail or email. For more information, or to file email comments, go to <https://malegislature.gov/cleanenergyfuture>

Statewide Wood Energy Team Videos Available

The MA Statewide Wood Energy team is launching a series of videos this summer!

These videos are a short and sweet introduction to modern wood heating and related forestry topics. Want to know what kinds of wood heating systems are available, what wood fuel to use, or which bird species love forest clearings? The SWET's got you covered.

Currently two videos are published, with more on the way. Follow the links to watch them on YouTube.

Getting Started with Modern Wood Heat

<https://youtu.be/OlyRM7pm5A4>

The Connection between Forest Management & Wildlife Habitat

https://youtu.be/Tv4mA_3M0UQ

Gypsy Moths – Another Bad Year Ending with a Welcome Crash

Last year saw the largest defoliation of trees by gypsy moth caterpillars since the early 1980's. More than 350,000 acres, more than 10 percent of all woodlands in Massachusetts were defoliated in a swath from Cape Cod to eastern Hampden and Hampshire counties. Drought conditions created a perfect environment for an explosion of the gypsy moth population. With very high egg mass numbers on trees this year, concerns were raised that even more acreage of severe defoliation would occur, particularly in areas where winter moth populations were high.

The very wet spring many regions have experienced in 2017 gave hope that the fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, which attacks gypsy moth caterpillars and has generally kept them in check for 30 years, might be better able to spread widely and result in high caterpillar mortality.

At first, the omens this year were mixed. Some areas again had heavy defoliation by gypsy moths, not only in oaks but also maples and even understory white pines. In other areas, however, despite the high volumes of egg masses, defoliation was less severe and significant numbers of dead caterpillars have been observed.

In mid to late June, the hoped-for crash happened. Reports of thousands of dead caterpillars came from around the state. The wet conditions resulted in huge numbers of caterpillars affected by the *E. maimaiga* fungus and dying on the trees. The hope now is that the gypsy moth population in 2018 will be considerably reduced, with substantially lower amounts of defoliation.

Repeated defoliations, particularly under drought conditions, can lead to increased mortality of trees. Landowners in the moth infested areas should monitor their woods and see if many trees, particularly oaks, have failed to put out new leaves after defoliation. If they have, landowners may need to consider having a timber sale to salvage the stricken trees before they become unmerchantable. White oak is particularly susceptible to mortality.

Massachusetts Forest Legacy is now Seeking Applications

The Massachusetts Forest Legacy Program is now accepting project proposals for consideration in the federal fiscal year 2019 application process. The Forest Legacy Program is a partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the USDA Forest Service to protect environmentally important forests from conversion to non-forest uses. The Federal government may fund up to 75% of project costs, with at least 25% coming from private, state, or local sources.

The MA Forest Legacy Program FY 2019 Request for Proposals application instructions are posted at www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/forest-legacy-program-rfp-fy19.pdf

Additional background information on the Forest Legacy Program is available at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/forest-legacy-program.html>

Proposals must be submitted by 5:00 pm on September 11, 2017.

For more information, please contact Lindsay Nystrom, MA Forest Legacy Program Coordinator, lindsay.nystrom@state.ma.us or 508-792-7714 x114.

Want to Know Current Pest Conditions? Get UMass' Landscape Message

The UMass Extension Landscape Message is an educational newsletter and update intended to inform and guide horticultural professionals in the management of our collective landscape. Scouts compile and record environmental and phenological data for locations throughout Massachusetts to aid in the monitoring of plant and pest development, the planning of management strategies, and the creation of site-specific records for future reference. Detailed reports from Extension specialists on growing conditions, pest activity, and cultural practices for the management of woody ornamentals, trees, and turf are regular features.

The Landscape Message is issued weekly during the spring, biweekly in the summer, and monthly the rest of the year. To read this week's message, go to <https://ag.umass.edu/landscape/landscape-message>

Mass Maple Production sets New Record

For the third year in a row, maple syrup production in Massachusetts set a new record this spring. Massachusetts maple sugarers produced 84,000 gallons of maple syrup in 2017, 7,000 gallons more than in 2016 which was itself a record year.

Sugar makers set 320,000 taps in 2017, producing slightly more than a quart of finished maple syrup per tap over a sugaring season that ran from late January to early April. While normal maple production is concentrated in February and March, this winter's weather meant there were periods in January and February with extensive sap flows, while much of March was cold and non-productive.

For more information about maple sugaring in Massachusetts, see the Mass Maple website at www.massmaple.org

Wasp Watchers is Gearing Up for the Season and Looking for Volunteers

Have you heard about the **emerald ash borer**, an invasive species that attacks and kills ash trees? Did you know that this invasive pest is in Massachusetts? The Massachusetts Wasp Watchers project needs your help to detect EAB!

We've found a wasp that is an expert at hunting them (**and doesn't sting people**), and we need volunteers to assist with tracking those wasps. To find out more and to sign up go to **massnrc.org**.

New Nail-Laminated Timber Design and Construction Guide Now Available

The Binational Softwood Lumber Council has released the *Nail-Laminated Timber (NLT) U.S. Design and Construction Guide*, a first-of-its-kind manual for the U.S. design and construction community. The NLT Guide was conceived and prepared by skilled practitioners who are each dedicated to advancing high-quality timber construction across industries, typologies and geographies. The guide provides direction to ensure safe, predictable and economical use of NLT, and offers practical strategies and guidance, including lessons learned from real-life projects.

“Nail-laminated timber is a cost-effective solution for those looking to leverage the economic and environmental benefits of mass timber construction. It offers tremendous design flexibility and is readily accessible throughout the country thanks to availability of raw materials and its ease of fabrication. Equally important, NLT is already listed in the code as Heavy Timber so it can be incorporated into a project without the need for an alternative solution application”, said Cees de Jager, General Manager of the Binational Softwood Lumber Council. “NLT is also a significant growth opportunity for our industry and, therefore, we are proud to have funded this important resource.”

Copies of the new NLT guide can be downloaded at www.reThinkWood.com , as can copies of the 2013 *Cross Laminated Timber Handbook*, which explains the uses and advantages of using similar wood technology that uses glue to hold the timbers together.

Project Learning Tree has a new Sponsor

Project Learning Tree (PLT), the award-winning environmental education program, that has long been sponsored by the American Forest Foundation, now has a new sponsor. In June, the AFF Board of Trustees voted to transfer the national sponsorship of PLT to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). The formal transfer agreement is expected to be signed by SFI and AFF in July 2017, pending successful legal and contractual arrangements.

Project Learning Tree’s environmental education curricula use trees and forests as windows on the world to increase K-12 students’ understanding of the environment and actions they can take to conserve it. In Massachusetts, PLT is sponsored by the Department of Conservation & Recreation, and by the Forest Alliance.

SFI’s mission, vision, and key objectives are to strengthen the connections between the conservation values of responsibly managed forests and sustainable communities, as well as supply chain assurances. SFI’s community engagement programs have included support for youth education and connecting youth to forests. SFI Inc, as well as several SFI Implementation Committees, have consistently supported PLT initiatives across the country.

Bringing the PLT program under SFI's umbrella will further SFI and PLT's reach in ensuring today's youth can be effective future leaders with a strong understanding of the value of responsibly managed forests, a commitment to sustainability, and the skills to make responsible decisions about the environment. PLT and SFI will also work together to engage youth in conservation activities and outdoor education.

Employment:

Department of Fish and Game - In-Lieu Fee (ILF) Program Administrator

The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is accepting applications for their new In-Lieu Fee (ILF) Program Administrator position. The ILF Program Administrator will be responsible for developing a comprehensive framework for ILF Program planning and implementation including: identification, prioritization, selection, review, and approval of proposed mitigation projects; monitoring and tracking implementation, performance, and completion of approved mitigation projects; and managing all financial, accounting, budgeting, and reporting activities and requirements related to DFG's administration of the ILF Program consistent with Department policies and the ILF Program Instrument.

The ILF Program Administrator is a position within the Office of the Commissioner but will also work collaboratively and in partnership with staff from the Division of Ecological Restoration, Division of Marine Fisheries, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the agency's Land Protection Program.

For additional information and details about the ILF Program Administrator position, and to apply, please visit the [MassCareers Job Opportunities website](https://masscareers.com/jobs/170003IV) and search for Job Number **170003IV** or click on <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=170003IV>.

The job is open until filled. However, applicants within the first two weeks typically receive preference.

For additional information about DFG's In-Lieu Fee Program [click here](#).

Questions? Please contact Christy Edwards at christy.edwards@state.ma.us or 617-626-1518

New England Forestry Foundation

The New England Forestry Foundation is seeking a Director of Land Protection, a Planned Giving and Land Protection Associate, an Executive Assistant, and a Communications Manager.

To learn more about each position and to apply, see <http://newenglandforestry.org/about/careers/>

**MFA Forest Update: Now accepting ads, both graphic and text !
Contact MFA to learn more, or place your ad.**

Upcoming Programs and Training

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| July 11 | Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisory – Charlemont |
| July 12 | Project Learning Tree workshop – Canton |
| July 14 | Draft APS Regulations Hearing -- Boston |
| July 17-18 | Pine Oak Hemlock Silviculture Workshop – Portsmouth NH |
| July 18 | Thoreau and The Language of Trees talk -- Boston |
| July 20 | Tree Growth and Response – webinar |
| July 22 | Christmas Tree Growers Gathering -- Sutton |
| July 25 | Biochar Production -- webinar |
| July 26 | Tree Farm Committee – Williamsburg |
| July 26, 28 | Tree Identification Workshop – Framingham |
| August 6 | Maple Producers Picnic – Granville |
| August 23 | Harvard Forest Summer Institute for Teachers – Petersham |
| August 26 | Christmas Tree Growers Annual Meeting – East Bridgewater |